

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the specification beginning on page 31, line 16, as follows:

FIGURES 1 and 2 illustrate one embodiment of a shower assembly ~~[[200]]~~ 100 formed in accordance with the present invention. Generally stated, the shower assembly ~~[[200]]~~ 100 includes plumbing ~~204 and 206~~ 104 and 106 for transferring shower water from a water source (not shown) to a nozzle 33, wherein the plumbing ~~204 and 206~~ 104 and 106 is hidden from view below a surface 13 and within a building element 30, to which the nozzle 33 is attached. The shower assembly ~~[[200]]~~ 100 includes a connection assembly ~~[[202]]~~ 102 which permits the coupling of the building element 30 to the surface 13 in a quick connect manner while permitting the plumbing ~~204 and 206~~ 104 and 106 to pass hidden from view between the surface 13 and the building element 30 through the connection assembly ~~[[202]]~~ 102.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 31, line 25, as follows:

Focusing on the plumbing ~~204 and 206~~ 104 and 106, the plumbing ~~204 and 206~~ 104 and 106 may be subdivided into an upper portion ~~[[204]]~~ 104 associated with the building element 30 and a lower portion ~~[[206]]~~ 106 associated with the surface 13. The lower portion includes a supply pipe 2 terminated in a plumbing fitting 1. The plumbing fitting 1 is a standard flanged terminating elbow as is commonly used within wall cavities and other structures for supplying water to subsequently attached fittings. Cooperating with the plumbing fitting 1 is a threaded adapter 3 which threads into a threaded female portion 4 of the plumbing fitting 1. Disposed at the top end 5 of the threaded adapter 3 is an appropriate fitting ~~[[208]]~~ 108 for connecting to a connector 6 of the upper portion ~~[[204]]~~ 104 of the plumbing. Preferably the threaded adapter 3 couples to the connector 6 of the upper portion ~~[[204]]~~ 104 of the plumbing in a quick-to-connect arrangement, one suitable example being what is known in the trade as a

JOHN GUEST fitting. The threaded adapter 3 is generally fitted to the plumbing fitting 1 prior to installation of the other components.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 32, line 6, as follows:

Although specific fittings are described and illustrated for coupling the upper portion ~~[[204]] 104~~ and the lower portion ~~[[206]] 106~~ of plumbing in fluid communication with one another, it should be apparent to those skilled in the art that any number of coupling systems may be utilized for coupling the upper and lower portions ~~204 and 206~~ 104 and 106 to one another and are therefore within the spirit and scope of the present invention. A few suitable examples of alternate coupling methods include coupling a connector 6 upon the upper section that is adapted to rotate upon the distal end of the upper portion ~~[[204]] 104~~ such that a set of external threads of the connector 6 may directly engage the internally threaded female portion 4 of the plumbing fitting 1, thereby eliminating the need for the adapter 3. Further, the upper and lower portions ~~204 and 206~~ 104 and 106 may be a ~~continuous~~ continuous unbroken section of piping, passing between the surface 13 and the building element 30 without the need of connectors.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 32, line 18, as follows:

The upper portion ~~[[204]] 104~~ of the plumbing will now be discussed in greater detail. The upper portion ~~[[204]] 104~~ of the plumbing includes a flexible section 34 of pipe and a rigid section of pipe 7 coupled to one another via a plumbing connection ~~[[210]] 110~~. Coupled to a distal end of the flexible section 34 of pipe is the connector 6 for coupling to the threaded adapter 3 as described above. The flexible section 34 of pipe is selectively extendable, expandable, and/or adjustable in overall length such that the connector 6 may be moved

longitudinally relative to the building element 30. Preferably, the flexible section 34 is adjustable in length such that the connector 6 may be moved longitudinally into an extended position wherein the connector 6 is at least partially disposed outward of the building element 30, as shown in FIGURE 1. In the extended position, the connector 6 may be accessed by the user to couple the connector 6 to the threaded adapter 3 prior to the coupling of the building element 30 to the surface 13 via the connection assembly [[202]] 102.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 33, line 10, as follows:

The rigid section of pipe 7 is affixed to the building element 30, and therefore does not move relative to the building element 30. The rigid section of pipe 7 passes through a central cavity [[212]] 112 of the building element 30, delivering water to at least one control device, some suitable examples of control devices being fixed or handheld roses, mixing valves, faucets, and spray nozzles 33, which are plumbed within the building element 30.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 33, line 16, as follows:

This detailed discussion will now focus upon the connection assembly [[202]] 102. The connection assembly [[202]] 102 generally includes a locking member, a receiving member, or a cam portion 10 which interlocks with a locking member, an interference member, or an engaging portion 20. The cam portion 10 in the illustrated embodiment is coupled to the surface 13 and the engaging portion 20 is coupled to the building element 30. The cam portion 10 may be selectively engaged with the engaging portion 20 to couple the building element 30 to the surface 13 in such a manner as to at least resist the longitudinal movement of the building element 30 relative to the surface 13, i.e., to resist their separation.

Please amend the specification beginning page 33, line 25, as follows:

Still referring to FIGURES 1 and 2, the cam portion 10 includes a passageway, open center, or substantially hollow interior 11. The hollow interior 11 is sized and configured to permit the threaded adapter 3 to be moved longitudinally through the hollow interior 11. Attached to the cam portion 10 is an alignment mechanism, such as a locating pin 12. The locating pin 12, which may be broken free when not required, helps the correct positioning and/or alignment (rotationally) of the cam portion 10 during fitting. More specifically, the locating pin 12 is adapted to cooperatively interact with an alignment device, such as receiving apertures ~~[[214]]~~ 114 and 115 disposed in the surface 13 and the plumbing connection 1, respectively.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 34, line 19, as follows:

Bolts or other mechanical fasteners 21 are used to secure the engaging portion 20 to the building element 30. In the illustrated embodiment, the mechanical fasteners 21 engage a pair of u-shaped screw pipes 31 disposed on the inside wall of the building element. Raised portions, such as locating tabs 32 may be provided to help position and locate the building element 30 with regard to the engaging portion 20. Preferably, the locating tabs 32 are located such that the locating tabs are disposed within the central cavity ~~[[212]]~~ 112 of the building element 30 when the building element 30 is attached to the surface 13, such that the locating tabs 32 are hidden from view. It should also be noted that although in the illustrated embodiment the engaging portion 20 is sized and configured such that the engaging portion is sandwiched between the building element 30 and the surface 13 and visible after installation, it should be apparent to those skilled in the art that connection assembly ~~[[202]]~~ 102 may be modified slightly so that once connected, the engaging portion 20 is recessed entirely (and hence fully hidden) within the building element 30 and/or the surface 13.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 35, line 1, as follows:

The engaging portion 20 of the illustrated embodiment is annular in shape and includes a passageway, open center portion, or central aperture 22 to permit the plumbing ~~204 and 206~~ 104 and 106, and/or other services, such as electrical services, to pass therethrough. Extending radially inward into the central aperture 22 are flange portions 23 which are sized and configured to cooperatively interact with the flange portions 15 associated with the cam portion 10, thereby interlocking the cam and engaging portions 10 and 20 to one another.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 35, line 8, as follows:

In light of the above discussion of the structure of the shower assembly ~~[[200]]~~ 100, the installation of the shower assembly ~~[[200]]~~ 100 will now be described. First, the plumbing fitting 1 is coupled to the cam portion 10 via fasteners 14, thereby sandwiching the surface 13 between a flange of the plumbing fitting 1 and the cam portion 10. The alignment pin 12 is disposed within the alignment apertures ~~[[214]]~~ 114, thereby ensuring that the cam portion 10 is correctly aligned relative to the surface 13 and/or the plumbing fitting 1. A seal 36 may be disposed in a recess ~~[[232]]~~ 132 in the engaging portion 20 so as to aid in impeding contaminants, such as water and debris, from entering the shower assembly ~~[[200]]~~ 100. The threaded adapter 3 is screwed into the threaded female portion 4 of the plumbing fitting 1.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 35, line 18, as follows:

The next step in the method of installation is to couple the engaging portion 20 to the end of the building element 30 via fasteners 21. Then the connector 6 is withdrawn from the building element 30 and coupled to the complementary shaped end piece 5 of the threaded adapter 3. The

building element 30, with its associated plumbing ~~[[204]]~~ 104 and engaging portion 20, may then be lowered downwardly over the cam portion 10. The building element should be positioned (i.e., rotated) so that the flanges 23 of the engaging portion 20 do not interfere with the flanges 15 of the cam portion 10 as the assembly is being lowered upon the cam portion 10. Moreover, the flanges 23 of the engaging portion 20 should be aligned with clearance cuts (i.e., the open spaces ~~[[250]]~~ 550 (see FIGURE 8) in the cam portion 10 permitting the flanges 23 of the engaging portion 20 to pass between the flanges 15 of the cam portions 10) such that the flanges 15 and 23 may be linearly moved past each other.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 35, line 30, as follows:

Once lowered, the building element 30 is rotated so that the flanges 23 of the engaging portion 20 engage the flanges 15 of the cam portion 10 in an overlapping relationship, interlocking the cam portion 10 with the engaging portion 20 as shown in FIGURE ~~[[2]]~~ 2. This arrangement impedes the building element 30 from being removed from the cam portion 10, while permitting the passage of the plumbing ~~204 and 206~~ 104 and 106 between the surface 13 and the building element 30. The arrangement results in the coupling of the building element 30 securely to the surface 13 with no externally visible evidence of attachment and of the plumbing ~~204 and 206~~ 104 and 106 running therethrough.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 36, line 6, as follows:

It can be appreciated the method of attachment is very simple once the cam portion 10 has been fastened to surface 13, and engaging portion 20 has been fastened to the building element 30. It is envisaged that the coupling of the engaging portion 20 to the building element 30, and the cam portion 10 to the surface 13 will preferably be completed at an earlier

stage by the various trades persons, or during the manufacturing and assembly process of the shower assembly ~~[[200]]~~ 100 for pre-plumbed embodiments. When the plumber or resident is ready to finally erect the building element 30, all that is required is the simple coupling of the connector 6 to the threaded adapter 5, and a bayonet type fitting action of the building element 30 to the cam portion 10. This arrangement makes installation substantially easier in the instance where not all trade persons are present on site at the same time. The use of fitting templates for the accurate positioning of the cam portions 10 can also facilitate the ease of installation for trade persons present at earlier stages, and ensure a more accurate subsequent fitting of components during final erection of a shower enclosure, partitioning, etc.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 36, line 20, as follows:

FIGURE 3 illustrates an alternate embodiment of a connection assembly ~~[[300]]~~ 200 formed in accordance with the present invention. The connection assembly ~~[[300]]~~ 200 of FIGURE 3 is substantially similar in operation and construction to the connection assembly ~~[[202]]~~ 102 depicted in FIGURES 1 and 2, with a couple of exceptions. Therefore, for the sake of brevity, this detailed description will focus on the features which deviate from the previously described embodiment.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 36, line 26, as follows:

Generally stated, the connection assembly ~~[[300]]~~ 200 of FIGURE 3 differs from the embodiment of FIGURES 1 and 2 in that the flexible section 34 of pipe of FIGURES 1 and 2 has been replaced with a rigid section ~~[[334]]~~ 234 of pipe. Further, the threaded adapter 3 of FIGURES 1 and 2 has been replaced with a quick connect or push connect fitting ~~[[303]]~~ 203. Likewise, the threaded female portion 4 of FIGURES 1 and 2 has been replaced with a quick

connect or push connect fitting 4 selected to cooperatively couple in fluid communication with fitting 203 in a quick connect manner.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 37, line 1, as follows:

In operation, the connection assembly 200 is configured such that it is possible that adequate connection of plumbing sections can be completed by merely pushing the building element 30 over the cam portion 10 in order to complete the bayonet fastening arrangement. In contrast to the embodiment of FIGURES 1 and 2, in the embodiment of FIGURE 3, it will not be necessary to pull the internal plumbing section free of the end of the building element 30. Since it is generally desirable that some visual confirmation of a secure connection be made, it is envisioned that this connection assembly 200 would be preferably used in situations where visible inspection and/or adjustment can be made through the wall of the building element itself.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 37, line 10, as follows:

Although a rigid and straight piece of pipe is used to form the rigid section 234 of pipe in the illustrated embodiment, it should be apparent to those skilled in the art that other forms of the rigid section 234 are within the spirit and scope of the present invention. For instance, copper tubing formed in a helical manner as depicted in FIGURES 1 and 2 may be used, such that the helical shape of the rigid section 234 acts as a stiff spring, slightly biasing the push connect fitting 203 towards the corresponding push connect fitting 4 to aid in the coupling of the fittings 203 and 4 to one another while allowing for some tolerance to handle some miss-alignment of the fittings 203 and 4.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 37, line 19, as follows:

Referring to FIGURE 4, an alternate embodiment of a connector assembly 360 formed in accordance with the present disclosure is provided. The connector assembly 360 includes an engaging portion insert 316 which can be positioned and held within the building element 330. The building element 330 shown in FIGURE 4 includes barbs 337 disposed on an interior wall of the building element 330 which interact with cooperatively shaped recesses 348 disposed in the engaging portion insert 316 to help maintain the insert in place. A plurality of such interacting features may be used to help retain the engaging portion insert 316 in position. Other fixing and fastening methods may also be considered and are within the spirit and scope of the present invention.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 37, line 18, as follows:

In FIGURE 4, the cam portion 310 also includes a base 350 which helps tidy the end of the building element 330. The base 350 rests on the surface into which the cam portion 310 is cast. Downwardly extending anchors 349 are embedded into the floor to secure the base 350 in place when the floor is cast. A washer type seal 336 may be used to provide a seal between the base 350 and the building element 330.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 38, line 1, as follows:

FIGURE 5 is a detail view of a flange 315 of the cam portion 310 interacting with a flange 323 of the engaging portion 320 of the embodiment depicted in FIGURE 4. Of note, the inwardly directed flange 323 is provided on an interior

wall 329 of the engaging portion insert 316 as best shown in FIGURE 4. These interacting flanges 315 and 323 are suitable for use with the embodiments described in FIGURES 1-3. Visible on each flange 315 of the cam portion 310 is a downwardly directed projection 340. Assuming for illustrative purposes, rotation of the building element (and thus the engaging portion 320) in a clockwise direction for fitting and securing of the building elements upon the cam portion 310, the leading edge 341 of the flange 315 may be inclined while the trailing edge 342 is substantially perpendicular to the bottom face of the flange 315. As can be appreciated, this ratchet type design will resist anti-clockwise turning should projection 340 extend into a recess 343 such as is shown on the flange 323 of the engaging portion 320. Similarly, one face 344 of the recess 343 is substantially vertical to resist anti-clockwise turning once the projection 340 is present within the recess 343. This provides a rotation resisting function resisting subsequent rotation and removal of the attached building element 330 and its associated components. As should be apparent to those skilled in the art, the leading and trailing angles can be varied to suit the requirements of the user. For instance, the height and angle of the leading and trailing angles can be varied such that once the cam portion 310 is interlocked with the engaging portion 320, the cam portion 310 is in a fully locked arrangement with the engaging portion 320, such that cam portion 310 is substantially permanently coupled to the engaging portion 320.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 38, line 23, as follows:

Even where a rotation resisting provision is not made, the provision of interacting features (such as projection 340 and recess 343) may be desirable to help ensure the

correct degree of rotation during assembly. Other methods including stops and raised end projections (on the flange portions and elsewhere within the various components) may also be considered to achieve the same effect so as to ensure that connected components end up in the correct rotational position.

Please amend the specification beginning on 38, line 29, as follows:

FIGURE 6 illustrates another embodiment of the cam portion 410 formed in accordance with the present invention. The cam portion 410 of FIGURE 6 includes multiple disc-like portions for further impeding the building element 30 from pivoting with respect to the cam portion 410. This embodiment is used in situations where a stronger or more rigid coupling of the building element 30 to the surface is desired. In the illustrated embodiment, in addition to the disc-like portion 454 of the cam portion 410, an additional disc-like portion 455 is provided. This upper disc-like portion 455 may include outwardly extending flanges (not shown) which also interact with inwardly directed flange portions on the building element 30 or its insert. In the embodiment of FIGURE 6, no such features are provided, with the outer periphery of the upper annular disc-like portion 455 configured to bear against the inside wall of the building element 30. Removed portions extending inwardly from the periphery (not visible in the diagram) should be provided to permit the flange portions on the engaging portion to travel past.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 39, line 11, as follows:

Still referring to FIGURE 6, the building element 30, which has not been completely lowered into place, is depicted to illustrate how the outer periphery of portion 455 bears against the inside of the building element 30. It can be appreciated that the two points of contact

further stabilizes the arrangement and helps prevent pivoting of the building element 30 with respect to the cam portion 410.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 39, line 16, as follows:

As a variation, the upper disc-like portion 455 and a separating body portion 456 may be removable/attachable to lower disk-like portion 454. This may be by means of a threaded or other arrangement. It is further possible that additional elements 458 (disc-like portion 455 and/or separating body portion 456) may be stacked sequentially one upon the other to extend the height of the cam portion 410 and thus alter its relationship with the building element 30.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 39, line 22, as follows:

FIGURE 7 illustrates one embodiment of an engaging portion 520 formed in accordance with the present invention and suitable for use with the embodiments of FIGURES 1-3. As can be seen, the primary body 570 of the engaging portion is substantially annular in appearance. Three inwardly extending flange portions 523 are present and again positioned to correspond with the position of the flanges 515 associated with the cam portion 510.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 39, line 228, as follows:

Centering tabs 572 are disposed on the upper face of body 570 to correctly position the wall of the building element 30 (see FIGURE 1). Apertures 573 are provided for fasteners 21 to pass through and secure the annular engaging portion 520 to the building element. Open hollow tubular features of substantially "C", "U", or "V" (other shapes

can be considered) cross section are provided on the interior of the building element into which the fasteners 21 may be screwed.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 40, line 26, as follows:

FIGURE 8 illustrates a bottom perspective view of the cam portion 510 depicted in FIGURE 7. FIGURE 8 illustrates the annular shaped main body 60 of the cam portion 510 and the outwardly extending flanges 515 of the cam portion 510. The flanges 515 each include a distension, tooth or protrusion 518 which engages a cooperatively shaped detent or recess disposed in each of the flanges of the engaging portion to impede rotation of the engaging portion relative to the cam portion 510 in the unlocking direction. A limit stop 520 associated with each flange 515 impedes additional rotation in the locking direction of the engaging portion relative to the cam portion 510 once the two portions are in the engaged/locked position. Apertures 561 allow for fastening screws or bolts to pass therethrough.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 41, line 4, as follows:

In FIGURE 8, the central portion 563 has a removable plate 530 which may be punched or knocked out should it be necessary to pass services therethrough. As can also be seen, the flanges 515 are distanced from the main body 560 of the cam portion 510 by a selected distance 564. This allows for the flange portions of the engaging portion to be positioned underneath, and also to compensate for the thickness of any seals which are used during installation.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 41, line 10, as follows:

Three outwardly extending flange portions [[15]] 515 are shown, though other quantities are suitable for use with and within the spirit and scope of the present invention, including quantities greater or less than three. While these may be spaced equidistantly about the periphery, non-equidistant spacing may be preferable to ensure that the attached member can only be positioned and attached in a single angular orientation. This will help prevent building elements being fitted in incorrect orientations, a particular problem where hinges, jets or supports are provided on the building element.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 41, line 17, as follows:

FIGURE 9 illustrates one embodiment of a capping member [[222]] 622 formed in accordance with the present invention. The capping member [[222]] 622 is a further variation of the previously described cam portions. Some building elements formed in accordance with the present invention will have a top or alternate end which may be open. If this is to be capped, it may be desirable to accomplish this without visible connection means. FIGURE 9 illustrates one embodiment of a capping member [[222]] 622 which may be used to cap the opening. The capping member [[222]] 622, in its simplest form, represents substantially a cam portion such as illustrated in FIGURE 1 (as item 10) though without locating pin 12. Fastening apertures [[61]] 561 (see FIGURE 8) may not be present either. Flange portions [[82]] 682 (corresponding to flanges 15 in FIGURE 1) are also provided on the main body [[81]] 681 of the capping member [[222]] 622. An aesthetically pleasing and appropriate cover piece [[83]] 683 is provided on the ultimate end of the body [[81]] 681, which would normally be the end which would contact the floor or surface 13 in FIGURE 1.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 41, line 30, as follows:

The building element (not shown for simplicity in FIGURE 9) would also be modified to include an engaging portion with which the capping member ~~[[222]]~~ 622 can interact. Accordingly, substantially the same component may, with minimal (or no) modification, be used for fixing the building element to a surface, as well as for capping/closing an open end of the building element.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 42, line 3, as follows:

An alternate embodiment of a capping member ~~[[224]]~~ 724 formed in accordance with the present invention is shown in FIGURE 10. The alternate embodiment depicted in FIGURE 10 is substantially identical to the embodiment depicted in FIGURE 9, with the exception that the cover piece ~~[[83]]~~ 783 is separable from the primary body ~~[[81]]~~ 791 of the capping member ~~[[224]]~~ 724. In this arrangement, an internal aperture ~~[[84]]~~ 784 of the capping member ~~[[224]]~~ 724 is threaded to allow the cap ~~[[83]]~~ 783 to be screwed in by virtue of its projecting stem piece ~~[[86]]~~ 786. In this arrangement, the primary body ~~[[81]]~~ 791 may also serve as a capping portion and therefore can be used at either or both ends of the building element. As a further variation, the internal aperture ~~[[84]]~~ 784 of the primary body ~~[[81]]~~ 791 need not be threaded, but instead, the downwardly directed stem portion ~~[[86]]~~ 786 can be configured to allow an interference fit, or another type of connection to maintain the cover piece ~~[[83]]~~ 783 in place.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 42, line 14, as follows:

FIGURE 11 illustrates an arrangement utilizing the internally threaded cam portion ~~[[81]]~~ 791 of FIGURE 10. If two of these threaded cam ~~portions 90 and 91~~ portion 791

are connected by a threaded tube or rod [[92]] 792, the result is a connector enabling two sections of building element to be quickly connected to one another. This increases the versatility of the cam portion and allows it to be used in a number of manners.

Please amend the specification beginning on page 42, line 19, as follows:

FIGURE 12 illustrates an embodiment of the cam fixture [[100]] 800 which may be used for connecting building elements at an angle to the surface 13. Here the main hollow body portion [[101]] 801 is inclined at an angle to the main base portion [[102]] 802, which is also configured to seat the base of the building element. These embodiments may be available in a variety of angles to suit different types of construction of enclosures, which will compensate for surfaces at different angles from the perpendicular or horizontal. Some angles (measured with respect to the surface) may be relatively shallow (e.g., 1.5 to 5 degrees) and thus these fixtures may compensate for natural inclines in the surface for water drainage. In other instances they may be configured to follow the contour of an irregular or non-planar surface mounting position. This is likely to be where the cam portion is not fixed to a wall or floor, but to a tray, tub, or installed article.

Please delete the previous version of the abstract of the disclosure. A substitute abstract is appended hereto as a separate page.